

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

SCALE HOW MISSION FUND.

DEAR EDITOR,

In the January PIANTA a notice appeared saying that as Miss K. Wood had been obliged for health reasons to go abroad, all subscriptions for the above fund could be sent to me at 28, York Street Chambers, Bryanston Square, W.

I fear that students have overlooked this notice, as so far I have received only *one* subscription. I feel convinced that this is not because students have ceased to take an interest in this, the only link that we, as an association, have with home and foreign mission work. Will you therefore find room, if you can, for this letter in the next magazine, and I feel sure more subscriptions will flow in?—Yours, etc.,

M. W. KITCHING.

The Poplars, Enfield, N.

January 22nd, 1915.

DEAR EDITOR,

Students who were interested in Miss Frost's paper on "Picture Talk," read at the last Students' Conference, may be glad to hear of a chart which should, I think, amply meet our needs.

It is called "A Chart of Mediæval and Modern Painters," compiled by Ethel M. Going, and published by Lamley & Co., South Kensington, at the modest price of 6d.—Yours, etc.,

M. EVELYN DAVIS.

U.M.C.A., Msalabani, Muhosa,

Tanga, G.E. Africa.

June 26th, 1914.

DEAR EDITOR,

I am now at Msalabani, about 30 miles away from Korogwe, where I first was stationed, and my chief work is to look after

the girls' day schools in the villages. I have thirteen schools at present, and expect soon to have more; some are only two miles away, but others are about two hours' walk from here. At present I am taking one school with a fairly large number of girls and a very inefficient woman teacher, who is at present away ill, and am going there two mornings a week to teach, and when I cannot go the man teacher has to keep an eye on it as well as his boys. They are rather unfortunate in that village, as their two schools lately fell down and now the boys have to learn under a tree, while the girls are crowded into the teacher's tiny mud-house or sit outside on his narrow verandah, and it is very crowded and dark. I have about three classes there; the top girls can just read very easy stories quite slowly and can transcribe, and are fairly good at religious instruction, knowing a good deal by heart and being able to narrate New Testament stories a little. I have to run three reading and writing classes when I go, in the most primitive way; the girls sit on the floor with their legs straight in front of them, and write on slates, the little ones copying what I have written on the blackboard which is placed on the ground, and the older ones transcribing out of their reading books. The bottom class learn their letters, phonetically and by syllables, by a combination of phonetic and look and say method from printed letter cards arranged on a board with grooves. Then we have an elementary religion lesson for all, including heathen, which is chiefly narration by me and repetition by them, as it is very difficult to get these children to narrate or even to answer a question in their own words. Then we all stand up and sing, or rather we make a noise, with hymns and songs in Bondei, the tribal dialect in which a good deal of the teaching has to be done as many of the children do not know Swahili well. They are very fond of singing, and quite good at rounds, and are now learning the Tonic Sol-fa hand-signs, which amuse them very much.

We used to have Swedish drill, which they love, only now we have not room. I call the names, and such strange names some of them are, and every school has several girls called Mambina or Mamtungakoa or Mamgangassa or Mamtunjuja. ("Ma" means "daughter of," so it is very common as a prefix before a woman's name.) Then we have very simple prayers in Bondei, and then the heathen children go out, and I teach the catechumens and Christian girls New Testament, the Creed, etc., and we have different prayers. They learn in Swahili as they are older and understand it, and most of the Christian services are in Swahili, which is the language of education and commerce and law all over East Africa and will soon probably be exclusively used. Then I teach a few of the girls who are "hearers," that is, wish to become catechumens and are being taught so that they may be made so. After this it is time to go home, about an hour's walk up and down hill through a very fertile country of maize and millet and cassava and banana and orange trees, with bright red paths winding in and out and occasional little clusters of brown native huts from which greetings are always called as one passes.

Three mornings, unless I am wanted on the station to teach or help in other ways, I go out visiting my other twelve schools in turn. It is much the same there only the teacher, sometimes a man, sometimes a woman, does most of the secular teaching, and I listen and inspect and criticize after school is over. Then I give two religious lessons, one in Bondei to the whole school on some elementary subject such as the Creation, the Providence of God, etc., and a Swahili New Testament lesson to Christians and catechumens. Sometimes, if the school is a good way off, I take my lunch and eat it in the teacher's house and hear the news of the district and receive visitors and visit Christians and catechumens in the villages round. When going to my special school

I do not start till 8, but otherwise I have to get myself an early breakfast and start either at 6.30 or else at 7.30, directly after church. If I get back by 11.30 I have lunch with the other workers, otherwise I get back at 12 and have lunch alone. Then there is school preparation to do, as I still have to write out the Scripture lessons, being so bad at the languages. In the afternoon there is district visiting in the numerous villages round to be done, and I am teaching English to a young man pupil teacher and also having lessons in Bondei twice a week from a native teacher.

On Saturdays I do not go out. In the morning the young men pupil teachers come. First I hear two of them give criticism lessons in the boys' day school in the village near, and take the criticisms through with them afterwards, and then I give them all a lesson on School Method in their own class-room. It is very interesting work, but it really is rather comic to be haranguing these solemn young men in my bad Swahili and saying "Things-which-are-known" (all one nice long word in Swahili) before "things-that-are-not-known" and various other maxims which we learnt at Ambleside, and they have to write out specimen questions, schemes of lessons, etc., and sometimes they are so funny. Then two Saturdays a month the women teachers come in to be paid and have their registers examined, and I take this opportunity to give them a little teaching. Then there is a Mothers' Meeting in the afternoon and various odd jobs to be done, as we have no regular servant, only a woman in for two or three hours a day and we share a cook and table "boys" with the men workers.

This is a very rough sketch of how one spends one's time, and gives no idea of the interest of the work and the delightful friendliness of the people, but one could not do that adequately in a letter.—Yours, etc.,

C. C. MONRO.

P.S.—I expect you have heard that Miss Jennings is now Headmistress of a big girls' school with boarders and day girls at Frere, in Natal, and she looks after the mistresses, mothers the girls, and runs the establishment, including several native and Indian servants, with great success.

STUDENTS' LETTER.

Scale How, Ambleside.

February 18th.

DEAR EX-STUDENTS,

The Spring Term began on January 16th, and though we have now been back for more than a month, there seem to have been few events worthy of note. Owing probably to the war, the number of students this term is less than usual, there being at present only seventeen seniors, four ex-seniors, and twelve juniors. We are all accommodated in the House and in the Millet House, and the cottage rooms are not used. There are two new girls in the Practising School, which now numbers eleven boarders and six day-scholars. Several of us have got influenza and are confined to the Millet House, which, it seems, was originally built for a sanatorium and is now being used as such for the first time. Its present inmates include three seniors, three juniors, an "ex," a girl from Fairfield, and last, but not least, a nurse.

It may interest last year's seniors to hear that their Belgian friends, Mademoiselle Jansen and her nephew François, now come to supper with us every day except half-holidays and Sundays and sit at each table in turn. By the way, we have now only three tables in the dining-room.

The rainy weather has prevented us from having many out-of-door scouting meetings. One was held in the Juniper Valley on the first Saturday of the term. The juniors were invited and joined with the Peewits in a thrilling game of

flag-raiding. Several of us are trying to get the Scouts Tassel, which is connected with the war, and includes a knowledge of the flags, national anthems, etc., of the Allies, the order of officers in the Army and Navy, etc. There is a new Tassel Honour called "Playtime," which includes story-telling, singing, reading, paper-toy making, etc., for the amusement of a child under six. A scouting meeting has also been held indoors for the learning of signalling, bandages, etc.

One day in the first week of the term the juniors gave their drawing-room evening, a great feature being recitation and reading. The other drawing-room evenings have been: Miss Dorothea Beale (late principal of Cheltenham College), by Miss Fletcher; "The Tempest," by Miss Walker; and Charles Lamb, by Miss Bennett.

On February 10th several of us went to a lecture on Florence, given by a Mr. Green. It was illustrated by lantern slides showing views of the city and reproductions of some of the famous pictures and statues. Everyone thought the slides were beautiful, but some of us were rather disappointed in the lecture itself.

We have been asked to include in our letters to the PIANTA anything of particular interest that Miss Mason says at Crits.; it may interest some to hear the following. A few weeks ago a history lesson was given to Class IV, after which a student objected that the girls had not had to work hard enough, as they had only read and narrated. Miss Mason then said that the work of a pupil fell roughly into two divisions, taking in and giving out, of which the former was the most important. She considered that the girls had succeeded in "taking in" the lesson, and had shown it by their narration; she added that narration was by no means as easy as we might think. Miss Mason said that education certainly meant drawing out, not drawing information out of

the children, but drawing the children themselves out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of knowledge.

A propos of narration, we now read our Education Books to ourselves for half an hour then narrate for half an hour, after which we have the usual report to write. I think we realize that narration is really hard work.

We have now 44 birds on the list and 22 flowers, 19 of which, including a primrose, were found in January.

I think all ex-students, and especially those who knew him as a boy in the school, will be sorry to hear that Stanley Hawkesworth was killed in action a few weeks ago.

We remain,

Yours sincerely,

THE PRESENT STUDENTS.

A NURSE AT THE FRONT.

In the January PIANTA there were printed some extracts from Sister Kathleen Flower's letters. Since Christmas she has left No. 2 General Hospital and has been sent with other nurses to start an advanced base hospital, nearer the firing line. Her address now is: B Section, No. 5, Stationary Hospital, Advanced Base, H.G., I.G.C., British Expeditionary Force, Field P.O. 46. The new hospital was started under very difficult conditions. Gas and water had to be laid on and the place was in a very dirty state. She writes:

"We have a very nice little hospital containing 85 beds, a beautiful little operating theatre with sterilizing room attached, a dispensary, and connected with the hospital is an inspection room, which means practically an out-patients' department, where anyone needing a dose of medicine or a little advice can get it, and where cases are seen before being admitted to us unless urgent.

"Of course, a stationary hospital is a very different affair

from a general one. General hospitals are used for Base work and are very large, 500 beds, and have a wonderful equipment, whereas a stationary hospital is supposed to be very easily moved. Where it gets its name from I cannot think. It consists of 200 beds, and the equipment is not elaborate, everything being arranged for quick and easy transit. It is generally placed so that wounded men may all be sent on from the clearing hospitals that are near the firing line. A system of classifying them is adopted, some being kept at the hospital if likely to get well quickly, or if needing immediate operation, others being sent on to the Base, and others again home to England. I believe that is the idea of a stationary hospital, but, of course, it has to be modified according to the need. Now here we have only half of one. No. 5 was split into two, as it was found necessary to have two smaller hospitals, and this is B Section.

"The house is a large one with many small rooms. Luckily, they open out of one another in most cases and so are convenient for wards. Two other sisters came with me from — on December 31st. On the 4th we began to get beds up and the place ready to receive patients, and it was a good thing, for that very afternoon we had to take men in, and by night we had twenty here. Next day we had more, and ever since we have had between 50 and 60. We are dealing also with the local sick, mostly men from the Army Service Corps, many of whom have been up at the front and are now stationed here. There is a great deal of exposure and hardship for them. Sometimes I think it is harder than at the front, for so much is done, and rightly, for those in the trenches, whereas the men here in many cases have to sleep under canvas, and the camp, though placed as well as possible, is slushy mud all over. The weather has been atrocious and all against us, but also sanitation in France is of the most elementary sort.

"Our staff consists of the commanding officer and two lieutenants and 41 men, and we four nurses are the only women about at all. Men do all the work, cook and clean, dispense, and scrub and nurse, and, of course, any carpentering that is wanted. . . . The patients are not with us long as a rule, and we try to send them out all warmly clad so that they will not harm from the necessary exposure. All the shirts, socks, and woollen goods that you and other kind friends have been sending we have used for this purpose. The cigarettes, tobacco, and pipes, also the chocolate and peppermints that you have sent us have given the men very much enjoyment, and we feel that that is what we must do when they come here, for they can only get very little in the camps. Matches and soap are also most welcome. The French matches are dreadful things, and soap is so expensive, and that is one of the things the men have to provide for themselves.

"All these things are continually being wanted, and most of our wants for the hospital general use are now supplied. We should be glad of dressing-gowns, bed-jackets, and flannel nightshirts, open down the back, also one or two air cushions.

"The town is a very interesting old place with many quaint buildings and a magnificent church—on the outside—dating from the fourteenth century, but I think the inside must be very much renovated, for it is tawdry. There is a fine river and a splendid canal. The town is surrounded by hills and is very pretty when overlooked from them. There are many nice walks round. The country is much the same as England. We have to talk French in the town, for no one here speaks English."

January 13th.

"Thank you ever so much for the parcel which arrived yesterday and which I was delighted to get. We are very

grateful for everything as we have only just started. We have not had any extras for the men except what you have sent, though I managed to bring some cigarettes and tobacco when we left — and so have not been short. The pipes were welcome, the vests and pants I was glad to see. Yes, please, send the games and some books. We have only some packs of cards, and the games will be useful. We want matches, soap, old flannel, and shirts, pants, pyjamas, bed jackets, socks. We are dealing with a part of the Army that gets very little sent out to it. The Army Service Corps does a lot of 'back kitchen work' and is often forgotten. I think the men must have a pretty uncomfortable time of it, and I am very glad to be able to give them any comforts we can. Many thanks for the tea. It was just in time to prevent my having to buy some here, and it is awfully dear and horrid stuff."

January 20th.

"Both your parcels have arrived and were greatly appreciated. The tooth-brushes we pounced on at once and all are gone, and the linen is most useful. We wanted it desperately. The nice piece of damask I am cutting up for tray-cloths for the officers' ward. The games are a great success, and, of course, the cigarettes, tobacco, mufflers, chocolate—all most acceptable. Also the bed socks; we were in need of them."

NOTES OF SOME LECTURES ON DESIGN.

At Scale How we have had some most inspiring lectures on design from Mr. Phillips, in the first of which he began by asking us to consider three things to be borne in mind—(i) our attitude towards ourselves, (ii) our attitude towards him, (iii) our attitude towards the subject.

Attitude towards Ourselves.—That we are all original, so we may all be designers, as design is one means of expressing

our ideas, and all design is original. Also, we are all geniuses, because we all get inspiration from the Divine Source, the source of all good and perfect gifts.

Attitude towards Him.—Mr. Phillips explained that we must look upon him as in much the same position as ourselves, only having had more experience; a few steps further on towards understanding design.

Attitude towards the Subject.—Nature is the source of all inspiration in designing. It is a mistake to take ideas from anything before Nature; go to a plant or a leaf for suggestions.

Design is a means of expression in lines; there can only be two kinds of design, concrete and abstract.

The Object of Design.—

- (i) Design is an educational factor.
- (ii) Design is the foundation of all applied art.
- (iii) Design enables us to study all other means of expression—music, writing, carving, etc. We cannot come near one of these arts without design, and the same principles underlie them all. They bring us into harmony with Nature, the source of all design.

Mr. Phillips went on to say do not *try*, but do it. Make a design as simple as possible; we can all design if we set to work quietly and intend to succeed. Then we were shown the difference between (1) arrangement, (2) design. Arrangement is mechanical and geometrical, as Mr. Phillips showed us by the arrangement of straight lines on the board. That design is neither mechanical nor geometrical was illustrated on the board by a small design.

All our scribbles must have a purposes, and they show what we are. None should ever be burnt, for often those that are thrown away are the best.

Mr. Phillips then showed us one of the simplest forms of

design, with the letters of the alphabet, and told us that he could never work at ease on a clean sheet of paper but preferred to design on the margin of a newspaper or any other odd place.

Then Mr. Phillips demonstrated by beautiful drawings on the board how all kinds of different shaped leaves may be evolved from one oval form.

Next it was impressed upon us that every line must have its meaning and must be drawn with a purpose which it is to fulfil, yet Mr. Phillips also said that a line on paper can represent anything. Draw a curved line and it may be made into whatever is desired, and one expressed thought is a step towards designing.

Continuity in designing may be seen from the way in which one thing comes from another and one thought flows out from the previous one; if this were not so, there could be no smoothness, wherein lies the chief beauty of design.

Most people bring their designs from Nature, whether directly or indirectly, but it was the Greeks who approached nearest to Nature; it was from her that they took some of their most beautiful forms—for example, the leaf which is so frequently woven conventionally or otherwise into their works of art. Mr. Phillips pointed out how many trees follow the shape of their leaves and how they grow with one object—to obtain light, and therefore life.

He went on to consider the means of breaking up spaces and the breaking up of the remaining spaces. To illustrate this he drew on the board two Cs facing each other and two more below, and then, by drawing lines, showed how the spaces may be broken up and beautiful forms evolved with these lines as bases. Another interesting thing which Mr. Phillips explained was how to make a design to fill up a square and then, by rubbing out the guiding lines, to have a design which still bears the form of a square. The examples

carry on the idea in Mr. Phillips's statement that "when one line is drawn it must be clothed."

He also impressed on us that we should look out, but never demand; this was illustrated on the board when he showed us how, with a little observation, we find the possibility of producing a beautiful form from a simple line and then how it may be enlarged upon. Inspiration is the reward of thought and attempt—*i.e.*, of hard work—for by this means we reach the back of all things. We must learn in order to express our own thoughts, else it is impossible to express those of others, but in learning we are not to seek to excel our neighbour, to receive ideas from him, *or* to impress people, for an artist is he who has ordered himself humbly to accept any suggestion which is given him.

Another point upon which Mr. Phillips laid stress was that we must not design, or attempt any form of art, because it has to be done, but because we *want* to do it; and above all things, if we wish to express our ideas we must obtain complete mastery over the tools in use.

Ideas grow very rapidly, and it is impossible for us to keep pace with their development; it is for this reason that we find such difficulty in getting the best out of those ideas which we do possess.

Mr. Phillips pointed out that it is wrong to make a design for one form of art—*e.g.*, embroidery—and then carry it out in another—*e.g.*, leather-work. He also showed the connection between the different arts—design, poetry, and music—saying that though they are all emotional, yet control is equally necessary in every one and in each case there must be harmony of ideas throughout.

In a song we may compare the association between words and music, with designing; there are designs for carving, sculpture, embroidery, etc., but these must not be used indiscriminately, and appropriate subjects must be chosen.

Association between the arrangement and the motive is necessary. For instance, an oblong panel suggests, for the design, a tall plant—this is right association of ideas.

Of course the design may be treated in different ways—for example, the upper part might be ornamented in the form of a tree or flower, but all the time we must not lose sight of the characteristics of the plant, as that would be wrong association. Thought should be exercised in choosing the plant for such a design, as some lend themselves more readily than others to the expression of thought. For example, the lily may be taken as the emblem of dignity and simplicity, while the thistle presents an idea of strength and life.

Mr. Phillips concluded by telling us that the way to test a design is to pick out first the good parts and then alter those which we see are bad; and never to think that it is impossible to make a design.

A LETTER FROM THE FRONT.

We went up to the firing line again and marched straight into the trenches the same night. Well, I thought I had seen bad trenches indeed, but nothing to equal these. The communication trench was over 600 yards long, and in some parts the mud was waist deep with a stream flowing through it. One of our fellows delayed the procession for one hour by getting stuck in the mud for exactly one hour. They simply could not move him, and he was quite exhausted. Our trench was in a horrible state. It is no good talking about it, but when we were relieved not a man could do anything else but just hobble down to the billets. I spent the second night in the trenches down a listening trench on guard. A listening trench is dug at right angles to our own and points towards the German lines, and the guard has to listen to hear any

sudden movements on their part. We were pretty close and could hear them jabbering. When we left the trenches after 48 hours we were supposed to go into rest for 48 hours, but on the second day at 9 a.m. we were rushed out and taken up to the line. From 10 a.m. onwards till 1.30 a.m. (15 hours) we were lying out in a field under shell fire; they were bursting on every side within a few yards of us. Luckily we did not lose very many. The day was just a great nightmare, and I cannot write about it. We were expecting at any moment to have to charge. However, we were withdrawn at 2 a.m., and went back to our billets, and I lay down dog tired, only to be awakened at 4.45 a.m. to take up a position at a barrier outpost on the main road. We were relieved soon after 7 o'clock, and again went to billets and actually washed and shaved! We stayed there till 5 o'clock (p.m.), when we were finally relieved and marched down here to the rest camp. I certainly was thankful, and slept without waking until this morning. Until 12 noon we were occupied in scraping off mud, and then I had an hour's leave and went into the town to get a decent meal. Anyway, we are here till to-morrow, when I hear we may go back to the trenches or may move further off. We know nothing just now, and simply have to live for the moment. I am well except for a bit of rheumatism and a sore throat. There are compensations, you know, and we are a cheery crowd sometimes. Last night you might have thought it was a march home to hear us all singing and being cheered on our arrival here by the inhabitants. How I wish I dare tell you about the situation the last couple of days in the line; but, of course, I cannot, and must only wait until I see you again. Several German shells were sent over here yesterday (six miles from the firing line) and killed about sixteen, wounding more. My old company officer came out yesterday from London and asked me to be his servant, but although I was awfully pleased about it

I have refused. Rumours out here are just the limit. Every moment someone comes in with one, and we always fear the hopeful ones are not true. Well, I must wind up and get some tea.

H. ST. L. FEILING, London Scottish.

MORE REMARKS BY SMILEY POG.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—With the permission of Smiley Pog's "Jane" these remarks are given in modern spelling, for the dear Smiley is rather archaic at times. It is earnestly to be hoped that he will never know that we have *dared* to use our discretion in the matter!]

What is a mood? Something intensely disagreeable, when indicative of Jane! She seems to be in one at present, so I am going to leave her severely alone and say a few words about some customs of the Brazilians at table. They get on her nerves, and when you hear about them perhaps you will not be surprised.

First of all, no one dresses for dinner—I mean they do not "evening" dress—but they do at times wash their hands in an apollogetic sort of way after dinner is announced. Is this the right way to spell this word? In any case, I 'spect they do it to propitiate the gods! Then there is no assembling in the drawing-room, but everyone strolls in to the dining-room when and how they like, the gentlemen often sitting down first and the ladies dropping casually into their chairs.

Soup is served. Our hostess this evening spread her left arm and hand well over the table, resting the right elbow on it, and bringing the spoon up to the level of her mouth, when the soup was "sirrured" up from the point.

Next came fish. Heads of fish are much appreciated, and the whole thing goes into the mouth, there to be manipulated and dropt out on to the plate when done with; sometimes bones are taken up in the fingers and sucked.